

## [J. C. McCracken]

1

Wm. V. Ervin, PW; Wichita Falls, Texas

Words 465

Page 1 INTERVIEW WITH J. C. McCRACKEN, EARLY SETTLER, ELECTRA, TEXAS  
(Wichita County)

"I was born in North Carolina. We came to Texas in [1830?]. We started early in October, and got to Texas the first day of January, 1860. We were about three months on the road. I am now ninety-one years old.

"When I first saw the Wichita country, there wasn't anything here but buffalo, which I [hunted?].

"One day my brother and I were out back of our place feeding some stock when a neighbor boy came riding by and told us that Indians had just killed his brother, John, over beyond a hill and some trees. This was in Montague county, where we lived then. We asked him how many Indians there were, and he said four or five. We hurried and got our horses, and my brother rode three or four miles down the creek to our neighbors. When he got back a bunch of people had gathered at the edge of some brush and trees. We went over the hill and saw the Indians and it looked like the whole valley was full of them. It turned out that there was about a hundred and fifty of them. There were not many of the white people, about forty, I think. The Indians came riding by where we were, and they were led by a renegade white man. I knew who he was. He had a place in that part of the country. They went on by, and didn't bother us because we were in the brush and it would have been hard for them to get at us. They captured a girl and took her with them. Her brother rode into them twice trying to get her, but he didn't. They didn't kill him, but it's a

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wonder they didn't. They went on [?], and captured a white woman and her baby. They took her baby from her and took it off, and one of the Indians told her, "Papoose go up," meaning that they had killed it. They cut her hair off close to her head. They turned her and the girl loose, and hadn't hurt them. It was supposed this band of Indians went clear into the town of Gainesville as the day after 2 they made their raid moccasins were found on the street.

"The Indians were more troublesome in this part of the country after the Civil War than they were during the war. We formed minute men companies—ready to go in a minute's notice—and we would patrol about forty miles and meet another bunch that patrolled another forty miles and so on, from Red River to the Rio Grande. The company I was with ran on to some Comanches and had a running fight with them, and killed four of them, which they left and didn't get to carry off. We left the bodies as they were, didn't take time [to?] bury them. I passed by there a good while later and saw the skeletons still there.

"We run down horse thieves, and brought back the horses, but not the men. We hung them."